

A NEW HISTORICAL TEXT OF
AMENHOTEP II

by

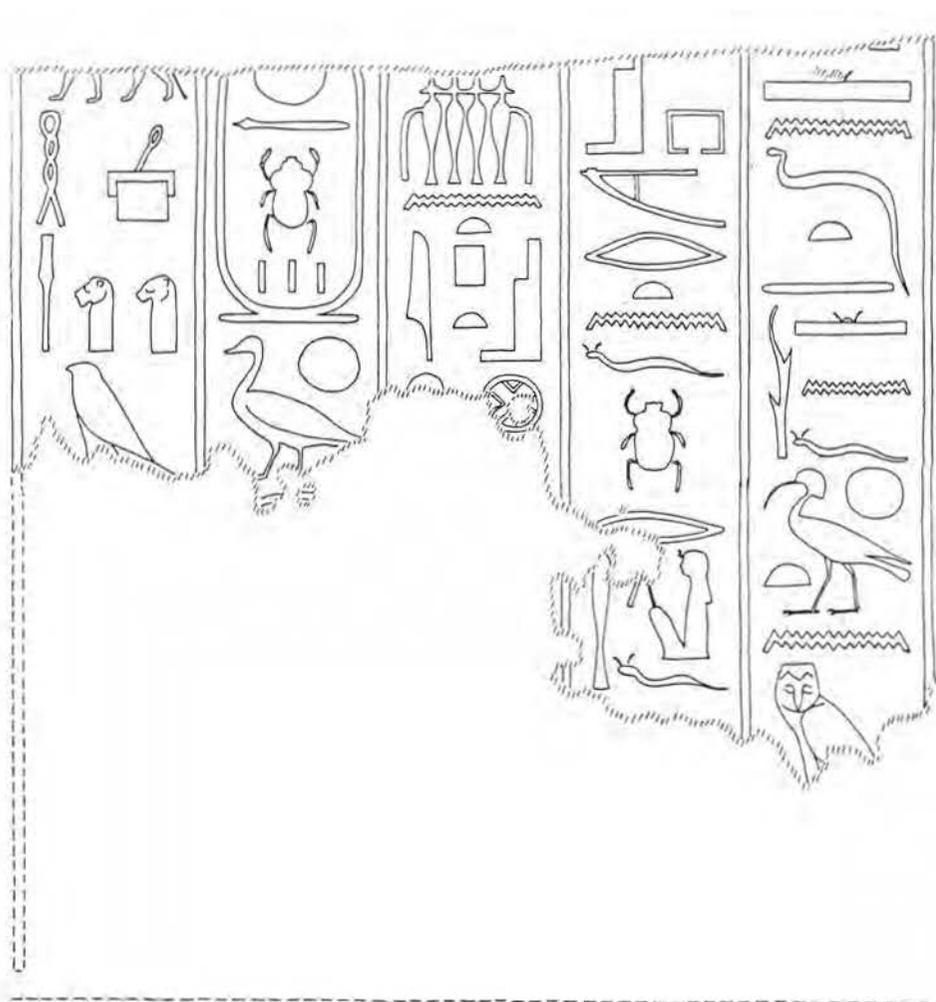
Charles Cornell Van Siclen III

While there remain still to be published a large number of scenes from temples dating to the reign of Amenhotep II, especially from the Theban area, the number of unpublished texts which can be considered historical in nature is relatively low. In the course of preparation of the publication of the alabaster shrine of Amenhotep II from Karnak, the fragmentary remains of an historical text came to light. Since such texts are rare, it would seem useful to provide a preliminary publication.

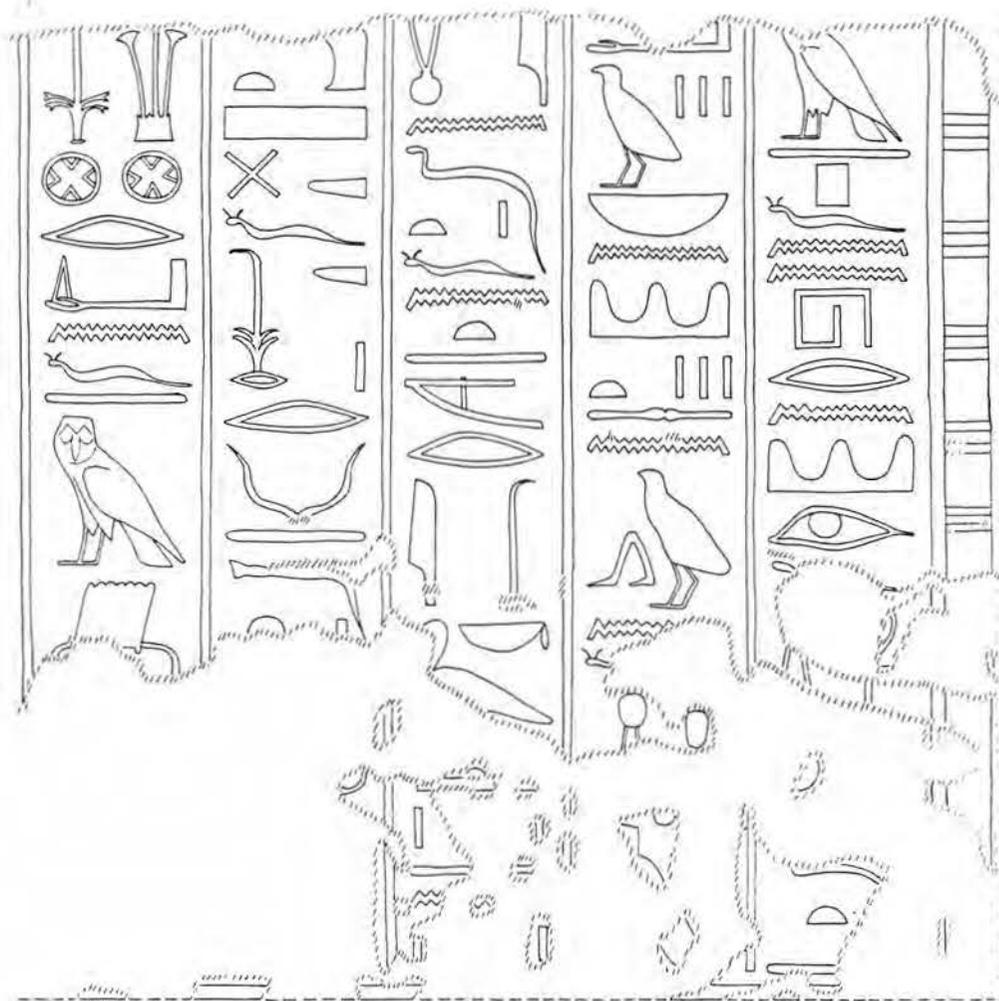
The alabaster shrine built by Amenhotep II took the form of a large, engaged naos decorated on both the interior and exterior, and it probably stood in or near the courtyard before the Fourth Pylon of the Amun Temple at Karnak. The shrine itself was finally dismantled by Amenhotep III, and the bulk of its stone was used as fill for the Third Pylon, but not all. Two large slabs of the alabaster were eventually used by Ramesses II for stelae which he erected within the Mut Temple enclosure.

The text in question comes from a block from the interior of the shrine and consists of the lower parts of ten columns. The adjoining block which contained the remainder of the text was one reused by Ramesses II, and it now has on its surface the ramesside text. The part of Amenhotep II's inscription which is preserved probably represents about half of the original text. It reads:

- 1) ... Mahes, powerful of strength; Horus ...
- 2) ... Aakheperure, the Son of Re, ...
- 3) ... Foremost of Ipet-sut ...
- 4) ... the place which he desired. His Majesty becomes ...
- 5) ... of eternity. He has taken thought for what is beneficial for the future ...
- 6) ... Upper and Lower Egypt. He has caused the land to be joyful ...
- 7) ... his southern border at the horns of the land, his northern (border) at the marshlands
- 8) ... like his serfs in Egypt, their taxes
- 9) ... all the wealth of foreign lands. He has surpassed the tribute from
- 10) ... from that land of Naharin, that he might make "given life" (like) Re forever.



THE TEXT (Cols. 1-5)



THE TEXT (Cols. 6-10)

The fragmentary nature of the text makes it difficult to gather the full sense of the inscription. The beginning columns provide names and epithets of the king and Amun. Cols. 4-7 would seem to deal with what the king has done for Egypt. Finally, cols. 8-10 concern, seemingly, the foreign booty obtained by the king. The mention of Naharin in the last column is particularly intriguing. From other inscriptions on the structure, it is evident that the building was the place for the Appearance of the King (h't nswt) within the temple, and this function may provide a further clue as to the meaning of the text.

(The complete publication of the Alabaster Shrine of Amenotep II is intended for 1985.)